

I urge my colleagues to support enactment of this legislation to provide for a study to determine the sustainability and feasibility of the island St. Croix becoming the 24th National Heritage Area.

GREEK AND TURKISH CYPRIOTS ISSUES

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking Democrat on the Europe Subcommittee, I believe my colleagues in Congress will be interested in the following letter sent by the Turkish Cypriot Leader Rauf Denktas to the Greek Cypriot Leader Tassas Papadopoulos on April 2, 2003. I am hopeful that Mr. Denktas's letter and its content will be a catalyst for renewed dialogue between Greek and Turkish Cypriots and a positive step toward a comprehensive resolution to their long-standing issues.

In this letter, Mr. Denktas provides a detailed proposal to lift all overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural activities from both parts of Cyprus. He calls for freedom of movement to be facilitated between the two sides and restrictions on the movement of tourists to be lifted as well. His measures also include allowing Greek Cypriot refugees to return to the Greek Cypriot sector of Famagusta. Finally, Mr. Denktas expressed his willingness to meet with Mr. Papadopoulos to discuss the core issues of a comprehensive settlement with the objective of reaching an agreement between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

While I understand that the long-standing Cyprus issue cannot be solved without great sacrifice by both sides, it is incredibly important that the United States and the international community work together to resolve this issue. Please know, I remain firmly committed to helping both Greek and Turkish Cypriots overcome obstacles and bring about a lasting peace for future generations.

APRIL 2, 2003.

DEAR MR. PAPADOPOULOS: Since our return from the Netherlands on 11 March 2003, I have been trying to reassess in depth the negotiating process resulting in the stalemate at The Hague.

Based on our re-evaluation and the responses given to the UN Secretary-General's proposals by both sides, I am now convinced more than ever that we have for too long overlooked the significance of the socio-psychological dimension of the problem, and especially the deep crisis of confidence between the two sides.

The Turkish Cypriot side sincerely wishes a lasting settlement to the forty year-old question of Cyprus. In achieving a sustainable and viable settlement that would be acceptable to both sides, the first meaningful step should, without doubt, be the improvement of the political environment within which we could allow for the evolution of a working relationship between the two sides through the building up of trust and confidence. This would enable us to resolve pending issues, thus preparing the ground for a comprehensive settlement. The island is, no doubt, the common home of the two co-owner peoples in Cyprus. In this context, I wish to share with you the following ideas and suggestions which I believe could initiate a process of dialogue and consultation leading to a working relationship between

us. This would greatly enhance the prospects for and paved the way to a mutually acceptable comprehensive settlement based on the political equality of the two sides and bring tangible benefits to both parties.

(i) As a first step, the fenced area of Varosha south of Dhimoktrathias street, including the area extending to the UN Buffer Zone, will be transferred to the Greek Cypriot control to be opened for resettlement.

(ii) Parallel to this, all restrictions on overseas trade, transport, travel and cultural and sportive activities from or to both parts of Cyprus will be lifted. I am convinced that Turkey and Greece will also positively respond to this by removing the restrictions which they apply to the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot sides respectively. We shall invite the UN and EU to acknowledge and give effect to these arrangements.

(iii) The freedom of movement will be facilitated between the two sides, subject only to minimal procedures. The restrictions on the movement of tourists will also be lifted.

(iv) Steps will be taken gradually for the normalization of the flow of goods between the two parties on the island. Cooperation shall be also encouraged between the institutions of both sides to identify and develop joint projects.

(v) The Turkish Cypriot side will lift the measures regarding the movement of UNFICYP of July 2000.

(vi) A bilateral Reconciliation Committee will be established with the objective of promoting understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between the two parties. This Committee will make specific recommendations for promoting bilateral contacts and projects. These ideas and suggestions constitute a package and should be regarded as an integrated whole. The acceptance and implementation of this package will neither prejudice our respective positions, nor will it be a substitute to a final settlement. I am prepared to discuss with you the above points and their modalities with the aim of initiating a cooperative relationship. In doing this, we could benefit from the assistance of the UN and the EU. These measures, I believe, would bring about a positive climate to the island and to our region. On the understanding of the above, I am also ready to talk with you the core issues of the comprehensive settlement and matters related to EU membership with the objective of reaching a mutually satisfactory conclusion. As we both supported the good-offices mission, I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to the UN Secretary-General.

Sincerely,

RAUF R. DENKTAS.

SUPPORT AMERICAN-GROWN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ!

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I recently introduced a resolution supporting humanitarian assistance from the United States to Iraq. H. Con. Res. 127 reinforces the ideal that we should send American-grown and made products to Iraq—and on American ships!

The United States obviously has a deep and enduring interest in the welfare of the citizens of Iraq who have been living under the regime of Saddam Hussein for decades. Iraq is currently suffering a humanitarian crisis that could worsen during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

An estimated 4.5 million to 10 million people in Iraq, about 40 percent of the population, will require food assistance within a few weeks. Unfortunately, most of the warehouses in Iraq that store food under the "Oil-for-Food" program are empty. There are few food reserves in Iraq. If action is not taken to address this shortfall, people will die of starvation.

Now that Operation Iraqi Freedom has begun, it is our duty to recognize the need for, and prepare for, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the people of Iraq. It is our obligation to provide American-grown commodities, such as wheat, to Iraq!

Food security will be significant in improving the quality of life the people of Iraq. Providing United States agricultural commodities to Iraq will help alleviate the humanitarian crisis there, as well as help strengthen our Nation's economy. Our Nation's farmers would certainly be proud to supply humanitarian assistance to a country in great need. Further, our United States maritime industry would be honored to ship supplies to Iraq in order to help with this critical effort.

In addition, the Department of Defense recently created the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. This office is a coordinated effort between government agencies in order to plan and implement assistance programs in a post-war Iraq. The resolution I have introduced commends the Department of Defense for recognizing the need for, and taking an inter-agency approach to, the delivery of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance for Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we can, and must, help to improve the living conditions of the civilian population of Iraq! The fact that we can do this with American products makes this humanitarian effort all the more beneficial, significant, and crucial!

HONORING McNEIL NUTRITIONALS,
SPLEND A PLANT, McINTOSH,
ALABAMA

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda Plant, a revolutionary manufacturer located in McIntosh, Alabama.

Each year the Alabama Technology Network and the Business Council of Alabama honors outstanding manufacturers with their Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards. This year, McNeil Nutritionals, Splenda plant, has received recognition as a Medium Manufacturer for excellence in leadership, performance, profitability and work force relations. McNeil was chosen based on its demonstration of superior performance in the areas of customer focus, employee commitment, operational excellence, continuous improvement, profitable growth and investment in training and retraining.

McNeil Nutritionals manufactures Splenda, the only no-calorie sweetener made from raw sugar which is from 650 to 750 times sweeter than sugar. This product was introduced in